

Boston, Mass., May 26, 1851.

Dear Mr. Estlin,

It has been refreshing indeed to hear so frequently from you of late, and, if we were not working tolerably hard, we should be quite put to shame by your zeal and labours. You have accomplished, too, more than I allowed myself to anticipate that you would or could. — Since I last wrote (which I believe was on the 14<sup>th</sup> April), I have rec'd. your daughter's kind note of Apr. 4<sup>th</sup>. (enclosing the "Clerical Teachings on Slavery", the article of Mr. Richardson of Newcastle—quite a good one — Res<sup>n</sup>. of Bristol & Cleifton A.S. Socy. — & small bill of W.W. Brown & the Crafts at Bristol); — also, your daughter's note of April 18<sup>th</sup>, (enclosing MSS. of P. P. Carpenter's lecture, letter from Trenton ~~and~~ N.Y., & the document of Rev. T. L. Crip.) ; and your own brief note of May 2<sup>d</sup>; — with enclosures. Most cordially do I thank both your daughter & yourself, for keeping us thus well informed of what has been going on. It has been very interesting to us to know about your movements — especially as their results have attracted a good deal of attention amongst us. The Res<sup>n</sup>. of the Gloucestershire & Bristol Union has made quite a stir in certain quarters, and the converts of the Banner, Stand of Freedom, &c. &c. have made some pro-slavery knees smite each other. In a recent Liberator (4<sup>th</sup> page) you will find an Extract from the English Correspondent of the N.Y. Independent, who has evidently been using your compilation, & has marked the effect of it upon the religious mind, with which he has been in contact. His testimony is

unqualified & strong enough - & shows the  
medicine to be working well. I have essayed to  
keep the readers of the "Liberator" & "Standard" tolerably  
well informed of your movements, but have not done  
all I ~~would~~ desired & intended - my absence at the Syracuse  
Meeting, at Leicester, & the multifarious business which  
meets me daily, compelling me to put off some things I fear  
would do, & hope still to do. - I shall send you a late  
N.Y. Herald, that you may read the speeches of Rev. Dr. Fyng.  
& Rev. Dr. Sam'l H. Cox (that wind-bag of conceit, impudence,  
& double-dealing) at the Colonization Meeting in N.Y. City. You  
will see that he is smarting under the English arrows. He  
is an apt representative of the dominant religion of the  
country - proud, flippant, over-Phariseeing the Pharisees, hard-  
hearted, — but I stop! When I think of that benign, humble,  
compassionate religion which it audaciously claims to  
represent to man, & which it so dishonors, insults, and  
utterly belies, I can find no phraseology to describe  
it fittingly. It seems as if it had well-nigh reached its  
climax of effrontery, & mockery of God. At the recent  
Meeting, in Utica, N.Y., of the (New School) General Assembly  
of the Presbyt. Church of the U.S., a Rev. Mr. Grosvenor  
offered a brief & simple Resoln. that the Fugitive Slave Law  
is a violation of the instincts of humanity, & the precepts of the  
Bible; - and it was received with general laughter!  
Laughter! just the way, exactly, in which the devils them-  
selves would receive such a proposition. Oh! the long-  
suffering of God to this wicked & stony-hearted world. The  
statement, which I have given, is in a friendly journal -  
friendly to the laugher. I saw - the N.Y. Journal of Commerce,  
than which no journal can be more deliberate, vile. When  
the vote, on Mr. Grosvenor's resolution was taken, only 2 or 3

\* If you sent me a copy, it was in my absence from the city, and  
I got ~~it~~ <sup>whiled</sup> away with the other ~~newspapers~~. Mr. Garrison is very particular,  
nearly, not to carry off any paper but his own.

voted for it! — over which the J. of Commerce exults, with an infernal glee. — Daniel Webster, with his poor, weak accomplice Millard Fillmore, has been making a progress thro' the Middle States, doing all in his power to poison the minds of the people, and persuading them to sacrifice everything for the Union. So the Slave Power drives us, with a "Union" whip. — Where all this is to end, who can tell! —

You doubtless noticed that I complained a little <sup>in the Liberator</sup> of the Gloucestershire & B. resolv<sup>n</sup>. This, I trust, you will <sup>have</sup> seen is not in a fault-finding spirit, — but I wanted to have them keep every eye open, for the pro-slavery spirit is subtle & crafty to the last degree. — I was really disappointed in the Western Unitarian Union; having hoped something sound & good from it; that American influence, which Mr. Russell Carpenter desires for good, appear to be already working among you, for evil. Thank you for the Inquirer, which contained a good report of doings at Bridgewater. I was surprised that the Taunton minister (R.M. Montgomery) should have come out so violently on the do-nothing side. Mr. Thos. Hanks did himself honor. The anti-slavery side seemed to have all the argument — which, the other side understanding, resolved not to listen to argument, but to act first, & then hear reasons — if they pleased. — I have never seen a copy of the Bristol Examiner, reporting the speeches at your <sup>Bristol</sup> Meeting. — I <sup>never</sup> perceive you do not expect anything from the Br. & For. Unit. Assoc. — I should think Dr. Hutton & others might thunder now. With such a sight before them as Dr. Dewey, striving to seduce the young men of this city from their loyalty to God, & bring them to tolerate first, & then support the Fugitive Slave Law —

I should think they might see some cause for a plain & searching word about their American brethren - I have lately had the unpleasant task to do, of exposing the moral cowardice & weakness of the "Christian Register". I am lost in wonder, as I think to what base & contemptible deeds our religious leaders are ready to stoop. - I wish the "Reg" & its conductor could have been more ably dissected and held up as a warning. What I have done, suppose, will get me some curses; but I have not <sup>shown</sup> one-tenth part of the evil the Register has done.

- I have also got into a slight controversy with F. Douglass; or rather, he replies rather petulantly to a remark of mine touching some half-way compromis he made at Syracuse. I do not mean to be drawn into a dispute, nor to let the Liberator be, by my means. F. Douglass has deeply grieved some of his warmest friends in the State of New York. His advisers are not the best. And, ~~between a friend & a political enemy,~~ gathering in his house, at Brooklyn, ~~Brooklyn~~ ~~Brooklyn~~, which ~~was~~ ~~not~~ ~~expected~~ ~~expected~~ ~~expected~~. But I wish you would not mention this to another living person. I do not wish to alienate a single friend from Douglass; and if he thinks he can work better, by pulling down his former colors, & hoisting new, let him make the experiment. Time will show whether he has been foolish or wise. - I hope I am not quarreling or becoming so; but I cannot even seem, by silence, to sto with trimmers, or time-servers, & least of all with the evil men, who now have the popular ear, in Church & State.

I will always thank you, & feel myself your debtor, for the freest criticism upon what you see of mine, in letters or in print. — I should much like to know your opinion of Douglas's new position.

Our Annual New England Anti-Slavery Convention - usually the largest & most interesting A.S. meeting in the country - will commence tomorrow, & hold 3 days & evengs. Geo. Thompson is to be with us. Most unfortunately, we have halls that will hold no more than about 600 - instead of 2000, as we have usually had. The City authorities are shamefully mean about Faneuil Hall. They will neither refuse it, nor grant it, to us. They are between 2 fires - apes between 2 bundles of hay - and between the two will, I hope, be starved or burned out-speaking in a figure. The other great halls are pre-occupied, & ~~will~~ have been long pre-engaged. We shall endeavour not to be so caught another year. —

Geo. Thompson proposes to visit Pennsylvania after the N.E. Convention - a somewhat hazardous experiment - and to sail hence about the 17th June. A Farewell Soirée for him is in contemplation. He has worked very hard indeed since he has been here - must have spoken in public upwards of 100 times - & with one or two exceptions, has disarmed prejudice, & won hosts of admirers.

I am very sorry for your daughter's illness at Bridgewater - ~~that~~ I feared she was doing altogether too much for her strength. Her mental interest & anxiety must have made heavy demands upon her impaired bodily strength; - I earnestly hope to hear of her being on the recovery.

Since the arrest of Suits, and his delivery back into Slavery, there has been quite a talk in Boston among the Slave-catchers. The Whig power, which has been in the ascendant in Massachusetts, almost without exception, as long as I can remember, has fallen prostrate ~~beyond before~~ by reason of their efforts to sustain Daniel Webster in his crimes. They have immense wealth in this State, and all the advantage which comes from long possession. But I trust they will not soon regain their power in this State. I don't doubt, the most of them are well convinced that "nigger-catching" will never be honorable or popular in the Old Bay State, nor in the North generally. Some fugitives yet remain among us - and we know not where <sup>or when</sup> the kidnapper may next strike. —

I am so glad the Crafts have been at your house! Fortunate indeed they are, to find such a home & such friends. If they are near you, please remember me to them very kindly. I hope we may be able to see them, some time, in their native land again - without danger. But I fear that time is not very near. To Wm. W. Brown I would send my regards, too. — I hope he is doing all he can for himself, & giving you & others as little trouble as possible. Of Box Brown, I hear unfavorable rumours; his character was not free from suspicion, before he left here - and he went off very secretly & clandestinely. I am very fearful he will do the Anti-Slavery cause a ~~great~~ damage in England. He is greedy of money, and selfish - that we plainly saw, here. If he does not behave himself pretty well, I hope he will be exposed.

without any hesitancy.

I hope Miss Tribe has received the "Standard" which I particularly requested should be forwarded to her, on the free list, to the address as given by your daughter.

Rev. Sam'l K. Lothrop, Pastor of Brattle St. Church in this city (Unitarian) is about leaving for England. He is one of the 'Conservatives', too easy & too respectable to mingle in the Anti-slavery work, - not as virile pro-slavery as many of the ministers - has managed to keep very still & unobtrusive during this Fugitive Law excitement - has yet to take his first anti-slavery step. - He has received one of the rewards of his pliancy, by being recently elected President of the Am. Unit<sup>r</sup>. Assoc<sup>n</sup>.

As Miss Carpenter collects autographs, I send her the accompanying autograph of Gerrit Smith, being the resolution of welcome to the Am<sup>r</sup>. Soc<sup>y</sup>, on the occasion of their meeting in Syracuse this year.

May 28th. Wed. Morning. A very few words, my dear Sir, before closing. Our N. Eng<sup>d</sup>. A. S. Convention has held one day's session, which were of an unusually interesting character - the position of Boston towards Slavery, the delivery of the Fugitive Slave, the profligate, and treacherous, & mean course of the City Government in regard to the Slave's case, in regard to the use of Faneuil Hall, & in regard to protecting the rights of a minority of citizens, were the chief topics of yesterday's discussions. Wendell Phillips has given new demonstration of his noble & fearless nature in his bold & searching censure & denunciation of the City authorities & their backers. - Last evening was mainly occupied with a speech from George Thompson, in which he unreservedly & very fully

told us what he should feel it his duty & to say :  
America on the other side of the water. There w.  
no disturbance - our Hall being very small, accommoda-  
ting only 500 persons, we had decided to admit by  
ticket to the evening meetings; this secured places for  
those who most wished to attend, and winnowed out  
the bad. Could we have had Faneuil Hall, or any  
large one, the doors would have been open to all. Our  
day sessions - in a somewhat larger hall, accommodat-  
ing from 600 to 700 - are open to all.

Rev. S. J. May of Syracuse introduced to the Amer-  
~~ican~~ Unitarian Association yesterday a preamble &  
resolutions on the Fugitive Slave Law. They referred to  
facts that Millard Fillmore, the signer of the law, - Daniel  
Webster its chief defender, - Sant. C. Eliot of Boston, one of the  
3 New England men who voted for it, - Abbott Lawrence, our  
minister to England, who is favorable to it - Edward Everett,  
Jared Sparks, Orville Dewey, Ezra L. Gannett, prominent  
advocates of the law or adherents to it - are all Unitarians,  
and proceeded to declare the Fugitive Slave Law to be  
"a most fearful violation of the Law of God." No  
discussion even was allowed. The Association, by a vote  
of 27 to 23, refused to even to receive the resolution! -  
Garnetted in their sin, heaven-defying, "incorrigible and  
predetermined criminals," (as Burke said of certain men in his  
time) there is no more hope that, in that aspect, they can benefit  
man or honour God.

But I must stop, - ~~Hopkins~~ soon to hear from  
farther. - Anne Weston told me yesterday she had recently  
heard from Miss Estlin - that she was better & had got back to  
Bristol. My best regards to her - and I am,

most truly & respectfully yours,  
Samuel May Jr.